

Madam Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the centennial season of the Fitzgerald Theater, located in downtown Saint Paul, Minnesota. On September 18th, 2010, Minnesota Public Radio, which owns the theater, will celebrate the 100th season of "the Fitz," as it is affectionately known, and commemorate its placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

Originally called the Sam S. Schubert Theater when it opened in August 1910, this theater has long served as a cultural center for the many visitors and residents of Saint Paul. In 1910, a young Saint Paul resident named F. Scott Fitzgerald was only 14 years old and yet to author the great American novel, "The Great Gatsby." Eighty-four years later, another great artist and resident of Saint Paul, Garrison Keillor, led the charge to rename the theater in honor of F. Scott Fitzgerald and his role in American letters. And thus, in 1994, what began as the Schubert was reborn as the Fitzgerald Theater. Now, at 100 years old, the building is the oldest surviving theater space in Saint Paul and is a cultural landmark for the state of Minnesota.

The 1,000-seat theater continues to serve and strengthen regional and national communities as Minnesota Public Radio's largest broadcast studio. The Fitzgerald Theater is also home to the nationally-broadcast radio show, A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor. More than 100 years after its opening night, the Fitzgerald Theater continues to evolve, while maintaining its commitment to compelling performances, live radio shows, and a legacy of significant literary programming. Without any doubt, the Fitzgerald Theater has contributed a century's worth of memories, ideas, and insights to Saint Paul and the national cultural and literary community. The Fitzgerald will thrive into the 21st century, playing a critical role for future generations in bringing ideas and information in the areas of news, culture, literature, and music to a broad audience, both in Saint Paul, Minnesota and nationwide.

Madam Speaker, please join me in rising to honor the centennial season of the Fitzgerald Theater and its contributions to the rich history and culture of the city of Saint Paul and the state of Minnesota.